

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested in light of the above amendments to the application and the following remarks.

Regarding the Specification

On Page 10, line 5, please delete the word "transfer" and substitute the word --transfers-- therefor.

Regarding the Claims

Claims 1, 2, 3, 15, 20, 25 and 26 have been amended and new Claims 33-35 have been added. Currently pending in the application, therefore, are Claims 1-35, of which Claims 1, 2, 3, 15, 20, 25 and 33 are independent. No new matter has been added.

Claims 25-27 have been objected to, as noted on the first page of the Office Action, yet there is no discussion by the Examiner of any grounds for objection. Respectfully anticipating that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, Claims 25-27 have been amended to incorporate the limitations of the independent base Claim 20 and any intervening dependent claim limitations. Applicants' respectfully submit that Claims 25-27 are now allowable. If Applicants have inaccurately interpreted the Examiner's position, Applicants' respectfully request the right to withdraw the amendments to Claims 25-27 (which were made specifically to incorporate the limitations of the dependent claim into the independent claim and not for reasons of patentability) and request clarification of the grounds for objection. Applicants' further respectfully request that the Examiner provide specific reasons for allowability, should Claims 25-27 indeed be allowable.

Claim 2 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Mannillo (US 5787537). Mannillo is a multi-pass continuous loop system. In contrast, the present invention is a single pass system. Mannillo uses DAF and RO filtration, which requires chemical adjustment to control pH. The present invention does not require this. Mannillo uses a cooling tower to decrease the operating temperature of the water. The present invention does not require a cooling tower. Mannillo uses a different filtration sequence than is present in the present invention. Mannillo includes a dewatering loop, which is not required in the present invention. Mannillo includes a sludge removal system, which increases the price of the system. In contrast, the present invention does not require a sludge removal system. Claim 2 as amended is not anticipated by Mannillo as Mannillo would not be able achieve the total wash water recovery percentage as presently claimed were Mannillo used as a single-pass system. A single-pass system is more efficient by using fewer resources to achieve the end recovery of wash water.

Claims 1, 15, 17, and 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mannillo (US 5787537) in view of Pattee (US 6010621) and Thomas (US 4211652). Pattee is cited as teaching a clay filter. Thomas is cited as disclosing a multimedia filter. Applicant has amended the claims to reflect that the present invention is a single pass system. As stated above, as a multi-pass system Mannillo does not anticipate Applicants' single-pass system. Similarly, Mannillo does not, for the same reasons, render the present invention obvious.

Pattee discloses a system which has a free-oil filter. However, free oils are rarely present in laundry wastewater due to the high amount of surfactants present that emulsify the oils. The free-oil filter would most likely require chemical pretreatment (based on Applicants' knowledge of similar systems) to break down the emulsion prior to this filter. In contrast, the present

invention preferably does not use a free-oil filter; rather, the present invention uses activated oxygen or ozone to oxidize the emulsified oil. The oxidized oils are then removed with a lint filter or multimedia filter.

Pattee teaches the use of a heat exchanger in an initial step to lower the operating temperature of the recycled water and allow for easier separation of the oil for free oil removal. The present invention does not require such a reduction in temperature in order to operate. Pattee uses a filter that is open to the ambient environment, which can cause contamination. The present invention does not use such a filter.

The filtration selection and sequence of use in the present invention is different than in Pattee and Mannillo. Pattee's process requires the presence of filtration steps not required by the present invention as claimed. It would not have been obvious to add the clay filter of Pattee to the Mannillo process because Mannillo's process is multi-pass whereas the present invention is a single pass system. Applicants' single pass system, relying on passage of the waste water through the system essentially once does not require the presence of the components cited by the Examiner. As the overall process of the present invention (single pass) is distinct from the multi-pass system of Mannillo, there is no suggestion nor motivation to combine the clay filter of Pattee with the Mannillo process to produce the process, apparatus and result as in the present invention.

Thomas is cited as disclosing a multimedia filter for removing solids would have been obvious to use in Mannillo instead of the Mannillo single media filter. As discussed above, the Mannillo single pass system is fundamentally different from the present invention as currently claimed. There is no suggestion or motivation found in Mannillo and Thomas to add a

multimedia filter to Mannillo's multi-pass system to produce the efficient single pass system of the present invention.

Accordingly, none of the cited references in the combination stated, render the present invention obvious.

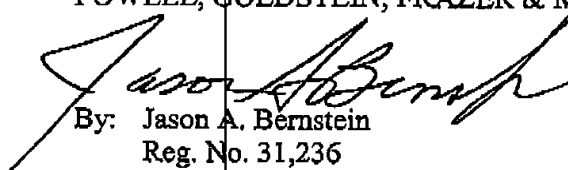
Claims 3, 5, 7-12 and 14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mannillo in view Thomas. Applicant has amended the claims to recite a single pass system. As discussed above, there is no suggestion or motivation found in Mannillo nor any other prior art of record, and it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify Mannillo as a multi-pass system to replace the single media filter with the multimedia filter of Thomas to achieve the single pass system of the present invention.

The remaining rejections can generally be characterized as citing art that adds to or modifies components of Mannillo to arguably achieve the present invention. Applicants respectfully submit that the claims as amended, which recite a single pass system, are not rendered obvious by the combinations cited by the Examiner, for the reasons stated above. Obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention when there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. *ACS Hospital Systems, Inc. v. Montefiore Hospital*, 732 F.2d 1572, 1577, 2221 U.S.P.Q. 929, 933 (C.A.F.C. 1984). For all these such rejections, there is no motivation or suggestion to modify Mannillo with the particular reference to achieve the single pass system of the present invention as currently claimed. A such, the claimed invention is not obvious over the cited combinations of art.

Therefore, Applicant submits that the new and amended claims overcome the Examiner's rejections and objections and are in condition for allowance, and Applicant respectfully requests the same. Should the Examiner have questions or suggestions which will put this application in line for allowance, he or she is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Applicants respectfully request that the above new claims be incorporated into the present application. No new matter has been added.

Respectfully submitted,
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